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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/018,112	10/28/2002	Effie W. Petersdorf	9498-23	1480
20792	7590	08/25/2008		
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ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1634				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
08/25/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/018,112

Applicant(s)

PETERSDORF ET AL.

Examiner

Stephen Kapushoc

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 May 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-11, 18, 19, 21-36 and 51-58 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-11, 21-36 and 51-58 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ ~~Notice of Informal Patent Application~~
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-3, 5-11, 18, 19, 21-36 and 51-58 are pending.

Claims 18 and 19 are withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 5-11, 21-36 and 51-58 are examined on the merits.

Please note: The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

This Office Action is in reply to Applicants' correspondence of 05/22/2008.

Applicants' remarks have been fully and carefully considered but are not found to be sufficient to put this application in condition for allowance. No new grounds of rejection are presented in this Office Action. Any rejections or objections not reiterated herein have been withdrawn in light of the amendments to the claims or as discussed in this Office Action.

This Action is made **FINAL**.

Maintained Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112 2nd – Indefiniteness

1. Claims 5 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 5 and 11 are dependent upon the limitations of claim 4, where claim 4 is a cancelled claim. It is thus unclear what the required limitations and the metes and bounds of the rejected dependent claims are, because the limitations of the base claim are cancelled.

Maintained Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

In the rejection of claims under 35 USC 103, the breadth of the claims is noted. The claimed array does not specifically require any particular probes of specific nucleic acid sequences. The claimed array requires only nucleic acid probes sufficient to represent a particular percentage of known polymorphisms in the HLA Class I locus,

where the specification defines a known polymorphism as one that has appeared in the literature or available from a searchable database (page 15 of the instant specification). The claims are thus broadly drawn to an array requiring only probes sufficient to analyze a particular percentage of HLA polymorphisms.

2. Claims 1-3, 6-10, 21-36, 51 and 55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bettinotti et al (1997) in view of Sapolsky et al (1997, EP 0 785 280 A2) and Guo et al (1994; as cited on the IDS of 03/26/2007).

Bettinotti et al teaches the sequence analysis and typing of HLA-A, B, and C genes from samples of genomic DNA.

Regarding the limitations of probes comprising HLA Class I polymorphisms and particular percentages thereof, as set forth in claims 1-3 and 25, the reference teaches a database of the sequence of all known HLA-A, B, and C alleles (p.425 – Abstract; p.427, right col., Ins.4-12). Thus the database of all known alleles comprises sequence information for HLA Class I region polymorphisms (relevant to claim 25) including at least 80%, 90%, and 98% of known polymorphisms in the HLA Class I locus, relevant to claims 1, 2, and 3, respectively.

Regarding the limitations of claims 6-8 and 26-28, the database of Bettinotti et al, which comprises all known HLA-A, B, and C alleles, because of its comprehensive nature, has sequence information pertaining to alleles of HLA-A, B, and C (relevant to claim 6, 26, 27). Relevant to claims 7, 8, and 28, the reference specifically teaches using the database in a comparison of the sequences of exons 2 and 3 (Fig 1; p.427, right col., Ins.4-12) of HLA-A, B, and C.

Regarding the limitations of claims 21-24 and 29-32, the database of Bettinotti et al comprises sequences of at least 86 HLA-A polymorphisms (relevant to claims 21,

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29), at least 185 HLA-B polymorphisms (relevant to claims 22, 31), at least 45 HLA-C polymorphisms (relevant to claims 23, 30), and at least 68 exon 2 and 70 exon 3 polymorphisms of HLA-B (relevant to claims 24, 32).

Bettinotti et al does not teach a microarray of oligonucleotides comprising a plurality of HLA Class I oligonucleotide probes.

Sapolsky et al teach a microarray of oligonucleotides for the detection of particular nucleic acid sequences. Relevant to arrays of the rejected claims, the reference teaches that an oligonucleotide array may comprise particular oligonucleotide probes complementary to particular polymorphic forms of segments of a nucleic acid sequence (e.g.: p.4. Ins.23-29) and probes may encompass one or more polymorphic positions (e.g.: p.4 Ins.47-48; Fig 3).

Regarding the limitations of claims 1, 25, and 33, Sapolsky et al specifically teach that an array for the analysis of nucleic acid sequences may be comprised of probes of 20 nucleotides in length (e.g.: Fig. 3; p.8, Example 1).

Neither Bettinotti et al nor Sapolsky et al teaches particular probe densities of probes on a microarray (as required by claims 1, 10, 25, 51, and 55), a microarray on a solid support that is a glass slide (claims 9 and 34), or oligonucleotide probes that comprise a linking group that is a 15-mer of poly-dT(35 and 36).

Guo et al teaches aspects of microarray fabrication for the analysis of nucleic acid sequences using probe hybridization.

Relevant to the recited probe density limitations of the claims (i.e.: about 250 to about 450 Å²/molecule (claim 1); 250 to 450 Å²/molecule (claims 10 and 25); 325 to

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about $375 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$ (claims 51 and 55), Guo et al teaches creating arrays at various probe densities. Guo specifically teaches a probe density of 'approximately $500 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$ ' (p.5460, left col., ln.6-8), where a probe density of approximately $500 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$ is about $450 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$ as required by claim 1. Furthermore, Guo et al teaches the analysis of various probe densities specifically ranging from $2500 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$ to $125 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$ (i.e. Guo et al teaches that in analyzing probe density a 5mM oligonucleotide concentration corresponds to a surface density of approximately $500 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$, and Fig 3b shows data for oligonucleotide concentrations of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.5, 10, and 20 mM, and the teachings of p.5459, right col., lns.30-37 and Fig 3a that there is a linear relationship between oligonucleotide concentration and surface density). Relevant to the limitations of claims 10, 25, 51, and 55, the 7.5 mM oligonucleotide concentration, given the linear relationship asserted in Guo et al, corresponds to approximately $333 \text{ \AA}^2/\text{molecule}$.

Relevant to claims 9 and 34, Guo et al teaches that microarrays of oligonucleotide probes were formed on glass (p.5457 – Preparation of ASO arrays on glass supports; p.5458 – Support chemistry)

Relevant to claims 35 and 36 Guo et al teaches that oligonucleotides covalently bound to a solid support (Abstract) may be comprised of a hybridization sequence and a spacer with 15 T nucleotides (Figure 1).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have created an array of oligonucleotide probes, as taught by Sapolsky et al, using the sequence information of all of the known alleles of

HLA-A, B, and C from a database as taught by Bettinotti et al. One would have been motivated to create such an array based on the assertion of Sapolsky et al that methods using such an array allow for the rapid, automatable analysis of nucleic acid sequences (p.1 – Abstract), and the teaching of Bettinotti et al that molecular testing for HLA typing by sequence analysis allows for higher resolution (p.425, left col., last paragraph). It would have been further obvious to incorporate the aspects of oligonucleotide microarrays specifically taught by Guo et al in the creation of an HLA Class I microarray according to Bettinotti et al in view of Sapolsky et al. One would have been motivated to use any probe surface density as taught by Guo et al, including probe surface densities in the ranges recited in the claims, based on the teachings of Guo et al that such densities allow for successful analysis of complementary nucleic acids (Fig 3b) and that different probe densities are optimal for different analytes (p.5460, left col., lns.1-14). One would have been motivated to use a glass slide as a solid support based on the teachings of Guo et al that such supports are an inexpensive support medium with a relatively homogenous chemical surface (p.5458 - Support chemistry). One would have been motivated to use the covalently bound probe structure of Guo et al (i.e. a linking group that is a 15-mer of poly-dT) based on the teachings of Guo et al that such a probe structure allows for efficient probe:target hybridization (p.5459, left col., lns.20-25; p.5460, left col., third paragraph; Figure 3d). One would have had a reasonable expectation of success in combining the various elements of the cited references because all of the references teach the use of the various elements in the analysis of nucleic acid sequences requiring hybridization.

Response to Remarks

Applicants have traversed the rejection of claims under 35 USC 103 as obvious over the teachings of Bettinotti et al in view of Sapolsky et al and Guo et al. Applicants' arguments (p.8-10 of Remarks) have been fully and carefully considered but are not found to be persuasive. Initially Applicants argue that the skilled artisan would not be motivated to combine the teachings of the cited prior art 'to form the microarray taught by Applicants'. However, it is the particular limitations of the invention as set forth in the examined claims, not necessarily any teaching in the specification, that is relevant to the instant rejection; and while there may be some additional teachings in the specification, if such limitations are not in the claims then they are not required to be rendered obvious by the cited prior art to sustain the rejection.

Applicants have argued (p.9 of Remarks) that the HLA loci are highly polymorphic and "the key feature of the oligonucleotide array is the high redundancy of oligonucleotide probes" (page 33 of specification) which overcomes the challenge in the analysis of the HLA loci. The argument is not found to be persuasive. Initially it is noted that there is no requirement in any of the claims regarding any 'redundancy' of any probes. Furthermore, the Examiner maintains that given the teachings of Sapolsky, it would be obvious to the skilled artisan to create an array of probes for the detection and analysis of any nucleic acid sequence collection of interest. And while Applicants continue to assert that Sapolsky et al only teaches detection of single-base polymorphisms, the Examiner maintains that such an interpretation of the teachings of Sapolsky is too narrow, where Sapolsky et al more accurately teaches the detection of

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any particular nucleotide sequence by probe hybridization. Thus while Applicants assert that the teaching of Sapolsky et al are not applicable to the highly polymorphic HLA loci, the examiner maintains that Sapolsky et al is applicable to the analysis of any known nucleic acid sequences, such as the HLA sequences taught by Bettinotti et al.

Applicants next argue that the cited prior art of Bettinotti et al states "the real challenge was to find a combination of primers that could effectively amplify all alleles at a given locus", and argues that thus the skilled artisan would not have a reasonable expectation of success using the arrays detailed in Sapolsky et al to analyze the highly polymorphic HLA loci. The argument is not persuasive. The statement of Bettinotti et al is a comment on finding non-polymorphic primer binding sites to amplify an entire locus that contains a polymorphic region (i.e. common sequences flanking a polymorphic region). After amplification of the polymorphic regions, the sequences of the different regions are determined by sequence analysis, and the examiner maintains that given the actual sequences of the polymorphic regions it would be obvious to create an array for the analysis and detection of the sequences.

Finally applicants argue that Guo et al conclude that a surface density of approximately 500 angstrom²/molecule, and that Guo et al notes that "surface density of the oligonucleotide probe" is "an important parameter", which Applicants assert is evidence of the criticality of the claimed density range. The argument is not persuasive. Initially it is noted that the value taught by Guo et al (i.e.: approximately 500) satisfies the broad density limitations of, for example, 'about 450' (as recited in independent claim 1). Further, there is no teaching in the specification that any of the claimed probe

density ranges are in fact critical to the broadly claimed microarray. Finally it is noted that while Guo et al teaches a particular approximate optimum density, Guo et al does teach successful hybridization over a very wide range of probe densities (Fig 3 of Guo et al). And while Applicants argue that the spots of Guo et al are 3 millimeters wide, and there is no teaching or suggestion in Guo et al that the teachings of Guo et al are applicable to a 'microarray', it is noted that there is no limiting definition of what spot sizes are required of the probes spots in the rejected claims. Thus the examiner maintains that the teachings of Guo et al are relevant to the 'microarray' as broadly claimed in the rejected claims. Additionally, there is no teaching or suggestion in Guo et al that the parameters of Guo et al as exemplified with 3 millimeter probe spots would not be applicable to probe spots of any other size.

The rejection as set forth is **MAINTAINED**.

Maintained Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. Claims 52-54 and 56-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bettinotti et al (1997) in view of Sapolsky et al (1997, EP 0 785 280 A2) and Guo et al (1994; as cited on the IDS of 03/26/2007), as applied to claims 1-3, 6-10, 21-36, 51 and 55 above, and further in view of Brown et al (1998, US Patent 5,807,522).

The teachings of Bettinotti et al in view of Sapolsky et al and Guo et al are applied to claims 52-54 and 56-58 as they were previously applied to claims 1-3, 6-10, 21-36, 51 and 55.

Additionally, relevant to claims 52, 54, 56, and 58, Guo et al teaches a linking group comprising an aminoalkylsilane and a phenylenediisothiocyanate (claims 52 and 56) where the phenylenediisothiocyanate is 1,4- phenylenediisothiocyanate (claims 54 and 58) (p.5457 – Preparation of ASO array on glass supports).

Bettinotti et al in view of Sapolsky et al and Guo et al does not teach spots of probes ranging from 100 to 150 microns in diameter (claims 52 and 56) or spots that are spaced with 400-500 microns separating the center of each spot.

Brown et al teaches aspects of microarrays of biological samples, including nucleic acids (Abstract; col.6 Ins.1-25). Brown et al specifically teaches that an array may contain analyte-specific regions, which are spots (Fig 3) where each spot has a diameter between 20-200 microns and the spacing between spots, measured center-to-center is in the range of about 20-400 microns (col.9 Ins.30-45).

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have created the array of Bettinotti et al in view of Sapolsky et al and Guo, including an array with a linking group comprising an aminoalkylsilane and 1,4- phenylenediisothiocyanate, as taught by Guo et al, with spot diameters and separation distances as taught by Brown et al. The artisan of ordinary skill would be motivated to use the linker of Guo et al based on the teachings of Guo et al that such linker allow for the efficient coupling of oligonucleotides to solid supports (p.5457 – Preparation of ASO arrays on glass supports; p.5458 – Support chemistry). The artisan with ordinary skilled could have performed routine experimentation within the spot diameter and separation ranges as taught by Brown et al to optimize such

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diameters and distances, including the diameters and ranges as recited in the claims and encompassed by Brown et al. The artisan of ordinary skill would be motivated to explore the spot diameters and separations to optimize array performance, and provide alternative reagents for the analysis of HLA class I loci, using routine optimization techniques known in the art.

Response to Remarks

Applicants have traversed the rejection of claims under 35 USC 103 as obvious over the teachings of Bettinotti et al in view of Sapolsky et al and Guo et al and further in view of Brown et al. Applicants' arguments have been fully and carefully considered but are not found to be persuasive. Initially Applicants argue that they find no reason to motivate the skilled artisan to modify the microarray of Brown et al with aminoalkylsilane chemistry (p.10 of Remarks). The examiner maintains that the artisan of ordinary skill would be motivated to use the linker chemistry of Guo et al based on the teachings of Guo et al that such linker allow for the efficient coupling of oligonucleotides to solid supports (p.5457 – Preparation of ASO arrays on glass supports; p.5458 – Support chemistry). In this case the use of the chemistry taught by Guo et al is merely the combining of known prior art elements according to known methods to yield predictable results.

Applicants additionally argue that the methods disclosed in the cited Guo et al reference are not identical to those methods used to create the instantly disclosed microarrays. Applicants argue that the specification teaches that 'vapor deposition' of aminoalkylsilane provides a particularly uniform surface (as discussed on page 27 of the

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specification). The argument is not found to be persuasive as the rejected claims do not require any 'vapor deposition'. As such Applicants appear to be arguing a methodological limitation that is not in fact required by the claimed product.

The rejection as set forth is **MAINTAINED**.

Conclusion

4. No claim is allowable. No claim is free of the teachings of the prior art.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen Kapushoc whose telephone number is 571-272-3312. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8am until 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ram Shukla can be reached at 571-272-0735. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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